

## **Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

1.     *(Currently amended)* An adjustable retractor, comprising:  
          an inner ring having a fluid-tight channel into which a fluid may be transferred to dilate the inner ring;  
          an outer ring spaced from the inner ring and having a fluid-tight channel into which a fluid may be transferred to dilate the outer ring; and  
          an a non-dilatable elongate sleeve open at opposite ends, the sleeve extending between the inner and outer rings and being connected at opposite ends to the rings.
2.     *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1, further comprising a radial support structure that provides outwardly radial forces to the inner ring.
3.     *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 2 wherein the radial support structure comprises a garter spring.
4.     *(Currently amended)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein the fluid-tight channel of the inner ring ~~is part of~~ and the elongate sleeve are constructed from the same piece of material.
5.     *(Currently amended)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein the fluid-tight channel of the outer ring ~~is part of~~ and the elongate sleeve are constructed from the same piece of material.

6. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein the fluid-tight channel of the inner ring comprises a discrete fluid tube.
7. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein dilation of the inner ring results in an increase in the overall diameter of the inner ring.
8. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein dilation of the outer ring results in an increase in the overall diameter of the outer ring.
9. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein at least one of the fluids is a liquid.
10. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 wherein at least one of the fluids is a gas.
11. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 1 further comprising a pressurized source from which fluid may be transferred to the inner ring.
12. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 11 wherein the pressurized source comprises a syringe.
13. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 11 further comprising a check valve in a fluid pathway between the pressurized source and the inner ring.
14. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 11 further comprising an output fluid pathway through which pressurized fluid may be vented from the inner ring.

15. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor, comprising:  
an inner ring having a minimum overall diameter of 20 cm;  
an outer ring spaced from the inner ring and having a minimum overall diameter of 20 cm; and  
an elongate sleeve open at opposite ends, the sleeve extending between the inner and outer rings and being connected at opposite ends to the rings,  
wherein the outer ring is provided with a pre-loaded rotational torque to assist with rotation of the outer ring about its central axis to roll the sleeve about the outer ring to adjust sleeve length.
16. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 15 wherein the diameter of the inner and outer rings of the retractor is sufficiently large to allow the passage of a newborn infant therethrough.
17. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 15 wherein the inner ring is elastic and may be deformed into an oblong shape for insertion into a surgical incision and is constructed to return to its original shape when released.
18. *(Previously presented)* An adjustable retractor according to Claim 17 wherein the inner ring is sufficiently elastic that it may be deformed sufficiently to fit through a surgical incision of 15 cm.
19. *(Currently amended)* A method of retracting the tissue surrounding a surgical incision, the method comprising:  
providing an adjustable retractor comprising an inner ring having a fluid-tight channel into which a fluid may be transferred to dilate the inner ring, an outer ring spaced from the inner ring and having a fluid-tight channel into which a fluid may be transferred to dilate the outer ring and ~~an~~ a non-dilatable elongate

sleeve open at opposite ends, the sleeve extending between the inner and outer rings and being connected at opposite ends to the rings;

inserting the inner ring, in an undilated state, through the incision;

transferring fluid into the fluid-tight channel of the inner ring to dilate the inner ring; and

transferring fluid into the fluid-tight channel of the outer ring to dilate the outer ring, such that the dilation of the inner and outer rings causes the sleeve to exert an outwardly radial force on the tissue surrounding the incision.

20. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein the inner ring of the adjustable retractor further comprises a radial support structure that provides outwardly radial forces to the inner ring.
21. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 20 wherein the radial support structure comprises a garter spring.
22. *(Currently amended)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein the fluid-tight channel of the inner ring ~~is part of~~ and the elongate sleeve are constructed from the same piece of material.
23. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein the fluid-tight channel of the inner ring comprises a discrete fluid tube.
24. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein dilation of the inner ring and outer ring results in an increase in the overall diameter of the rings.
25. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein a fluid used to dilate the inner and outer rings is a liquid.
26. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein a fluid used to dilate the inner and outer rings is a gas.

27. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 further comprising providing a pressurized source from which fluid may be transferred to the inner ring.
28. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 wherein the pressurized source comprises a syringe.
29. *(Previously presented)* A method according to Claim 19 further comprising venting fluid from the inner ring through an output pathway and removing the inner ring from the incision, once a surgical procedure performed through the incision is complete.
30. *(New)* A method of retracting the tissue surrounding a surgical incision, the method comprising:
- providing an adjustable retractor comprising an elastic inner ring having a minimum overall diameter of 20 cm, an outer ring spaced from the inner ring and having a minimum overall diameter of 20 cm, and an elongate sleeve open at opposite ends, the sleeve extending between the inner and outer rings and being connected at opposite ends to the rings, wherein the outer ring is provided with a pre-loaded rotational torque to assist with rotation of the outer ring about its central axis to roll the sleeve about the outer ring to adjust sleeve length;
  - deforming the inner ring into an oblong shape and inserting it into the surgical incision;
  - releasing the inner ring such that it returns to its original shape under skin surrounding the incision; and
  - adjusting the length of the sleeve by rotating the outer ring about its central axis with the assistance of the pre-loaded torque to roll the sleeve about itself and the outer ring to adjust sleeve length.

31. (New) A method according to Claim 30, wherein the outer ring is formed in a mobius configuration to provide the pre-loaded rotational torque on the outer ring.
32. (New) A method according to Claim 30 wherein the surgical incision is part of a caesarean section, and the diameter of the inner and outer rings of the retractor is sufficiently large to allow the passage of a newborn infant therethrough.
33. (New) An adjustable retractor according to Claim 30 wherein the surgical incision is approximately 15 cm in length.
34. (New) A method of retracting the tissue for a surgical procedure, the method comprising:
- making an incision no longer than approximately 15 cm;
  - providing an adjustable retractor comprising an elastic inner ring having a overall diameter of approximately 25 cm, an outer ring spaced from the inner ring and having an overall diameter of approximately 25 cm, and an elongate sleeve open at opposite ends, the sleeve extending between the inner and outer rings and being connected at opposite ends to the rings
  - deforming the inner ring into an oblong shape and inserting it into the surgical incision;
  - releasing the inner ring such that it returns to its original shape under skin surrounding the incision; and
  - adjusting the length of the sleeve by rotating the outer ring about its central axis with the assistance of the pre-loaded torque to roll the sleeve about itself and the outer ring to adjust sleeve length.
35. (New) A method according to Claim 34, wherein the outer ring is provided with a pre-loaded rotational torque to assist with rotation of the outer ring about its central axis to roll the sleeve about the outer ring to adjust sleeve length.

36. (New) A method according to Claim 35, wherein the outer ring is formed in a mobius configuration to provide the pre-loaded rotational torque on the outer ring.
37. (New) A method according to Claim 34 wherein the surgical incision is part of a caesarean section, and the diameter of the inner and outer rings of the retractor is sufficiently large to allow the passage of a newborn infant therethrough.
38. (New) A method of retracting the tissue for a surgical procedure, the method comprising:
- making an incision no longer than a predetermined incision length;
  - providing an adjustable retractor comprising an elastic inner ring having a diameter that is significantly larger than the incision length, such that the incision length is no greater than approximately 60% of the inner ring diameter, an outer ring spaced from the inner ring, and an elongate sleeve open at opposite ends, the sleeve extending between the inner and outer rings and being connected at opposite ends to the rings
  - deforming the inner ring into an oblong shape and inserting it into the surgical incision;
  - releasing the inner ring such that it returns to its original shape under skin surrounding the incision; and
  - adjusting the length of the sleeve by rotating the outer ring about its central axis with the assistance of the pre-loaded torque to roll the sleeve about itself and the outer ring to adjust sleeve length.
39. (New) A method according to Claim 38, wherein the outer ring is provided with a pre-loaded rotational torque to assist with rotation of the outer ring about its central axis to roll the sleeve about the outer ring to adjust sleeve length.
40. (New) A method according to Claim 39, wherein the outer ring is formed in a mobius configuration to provide the pre-loaded rotational torque on the outer ring.

41. (New) A method according to Claim 34 wherein the surgical incision is part of a caesarean section, and the diameter of the inner and outer rings of the retractor is sufficiently large to allow the passage of a newborn infant therethrough.
42. (New) An adjustable retractor according to Claim 34 wherein the surgical incision is approximately 15 cm in length.